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SUBJECT: Iraqi Kurdistan Region Media Summary -- March 10, 2007

¶1. (U) This is a Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) cable.

Adnan Al Mufti: Kurds Will Maintain Relations with Shi'a Coalition

¶2. (U) PUKmedia.com covered a press statement by KNA Speaker Adnan Al Mufti saying that the Kurdish Bloc in the Iraq National Assembly (INA) will maintain relations with the Shi'a Coalition. (Note: Following last week's of Al Fadila party from the Shi'a Coalition, Iliad Alawi visited the Kurdistan Region, raising public speculation that Kurdish INA members would align with Alawi.) Al Mufti stated, "We insist on keeping this relation with the Shi'a Coalition. This relationship supports the Iraqi government."

Ansar Al Islam Arrest in Penjwin

¶3. (U) PUKmedia.com reported on the arrest of an Ansar Al Islam leader by local police in the Penjwin, a town on the border with Iran. The head of Penjwin Police touted the capture in a statement for PUKmedia: "After we received intelligence information, we attacked the terrorist's hiding place and got him."

KRG President Meets with General Wierzinski

¶4. (U) KDP media outlets covered the meeting of KRG President Masoud Barzani with the General Wierzinski from the Coalitional Forces. According to reports, the two discussed security in Mosul Province. Following the meeting General Wierzinski visited grave of Mulla Mustafa Barzani, founder of the KDP.

Women's Conference Marks International Women's Day in Erbil

¶5. (U) The major Kurdish media covered the March 8 conference on the Status of Women held by the local NGO Kurdish National Congress. Shereen Amedi, head of Kurdistan Women's Union, delivered a keynote address calling for increased participation of women in society. The conference was held under the patronage of KRG President Masoud Barzani. Muhammad Mullah Qadir made a statement on Barzani's behalf and Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA) speaker Adnan Al Mufti made a statement for the KNA. The conference was attended by KRG ministers, KNA members, and representatives of women's NGOs in the Kurdistan Region.

Reports of Bomb Explosion in Sulaimaniyah Denied by Security Forces

¶6. (U) The major Kurdish media covered reports of a bomb explosion in the Sulaimaniyah City neighborhood of Hewari Taza on March 9. An anonymous source from the Sulaimaniyah Asayish security forces

denied that the explosion was a bomb saying that it was "Flash Thunder," an explosive device intended to make noise but cause no harm to people or property. The same source was quoted, "we did not arrest anyone and have no reason to believe a terrorist group is behind this explosion."

Dutch and Polish Companies Ready to Invest in Kurdistan

¶7. (U) Major Kurdish media covered a meeting between KRG Minister of Planning Osman Shwani with executives from Dutch and Polish companies that are interested in investing in the Kurdistan Region. Shwani encouraged the companies to invest, explaining that the security and stability of the region provided the perfect environment for foreign investment.

¶8. (U) This media summary is prepared by Public Diplomacy Assistant Tawar Rasheed.